

IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank those watching and my colleagues who will join me in the next half hour to talk about journalism, the importance of journalism in the United States and the importance of journalism to democracy.

Abraham Lincoln once said: Let the people know the facts, and the country will be safe.

The challenge is, how do we get them those facts?

For professional journalists, there is nothing more important. They don't always make us who hold office happy. Sometimes, we disagree with them. Sometimes, we think they are not being fair. But they are extremely important to the success or failure of American democracy.

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Neil Postman, in 1985, in his book, "Amusing Ourselves to Death," wrote about his own belief in 1985 that how people got information in journalism was changing too dramatically, and he was just talking about the media in terms of television news. Think about how much that has changed since 1985.

Mr. Postman talked about the Lincoln-Douglas debates and that thousands of people would go and listen to those debates because Douglas and Lincoln took the time to write out what they would say and how they anticipated answering questions. People would listen without speakers and without any kind of amplification of what they were saying—thousands of people—for as long as 6 or 7 hours, with a break for dinner.

Mr. Postman's whole argument was this was cognitively different, that when you read something that was prepared over and over again by people who were really good writers, people responded differently and they accepted factual information in a different way than we were learning to accept facts.

Now, in 2019, with this administration and with social media and 24/7 news, I think Mr. Postman would be horrified about how Americans get their facts, how they cognitively process them, and how they engage as American citizens.

There is nothing more important than, as Lincoln said and I would opine, that Americans get journalism with factual content, with the professional expertise of people, many of whom have gone to school, to journalism schools for undergraduate degrees, often for graduate degrees, who go out to work for not a whole lot of money but to be able to investigate, get to the facts, and then communicate. Too many of us underestimate those talents. Maybe we have become spoiled.

But what has happened is a consequence of many things. The business model has changed. Being from the bay area, Craigslist changed classified ads, and that is a revenue source to print journalism. But now as it moves to digital, a group of us wants to talk about what we can do appropriately in Congress and maybe work with—not maybe, but work with State and local officials to talk about how we can appropriately support professional journalism so we can get back to that point where Americans are engaged in a very deep way in their discussion with government and, specifically, with local government.

Most Americans—and maybe it is because I came from local government—learn about democracy, oftentimes, at the local level. They know the people who are in the city council and on the school board. An issue comes up. Their kids start to go to school, and they take an interest in the governance and superintendent and the superintendent's bosses. They care about the curriculum. Maybe there is a land use decision at their city council, and so they start to learn about democracy in a meaningful way that way.

Heretofore, except in the last 10 years with the demise of local journalism, for a variety of reasons, they don't get that information. They get a lot of information about Congress. They get a lot of information about the President of the United States, and some information still at the state-house, but not nearly as much, and very little at the local level.

I will say there are heroic people out there who are still doing great local journalism, but because of the business model and because of consolidations, that has become, I am afraid, very ill.

So just in terms of the definition of the problem, in 2017, estimated daily U.S. newspaper circulation—that is print and digital. So when we focus on, "Oh, well, print is gone; forget about it," we realize that the business model has changed.

But there is a digital model here that we can see in The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Boston Globe, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle. There is still a model. But their ability to talk about local news is where we have to get more effort, I think, in understanding, as citizens.

Circulation, print and digital, in 2017 was 31 million for weekday and 34 million for Sunday. That is down 11 and 10 percent, respectively, from each previous year. The chart next to me shows the steady decline.

Newspaper consumption—that is digital and print—has been falling every year since 1994. Today most Americans get their news from television and social media, the primary way they get their information.

Fifty-five percent of Americans are regularly tuning into TV to consume that news information. In contrast, only 20 percent of Americans regularly

get their news from a physical newspaper. Only 38 percent of Americans regularly get their news online.

In 2017, advertising revenue for the entire newspaper industry was \$16.5 billion, a 10 percent decrease from 2016.

Then there are consolidations, an issue that I know Mr. CICILLINE will talk about, the consolidation of the print newspaper business in particular.

And I will say this for the bay area where I live and represent, in the bay area, newspapers, at their peak, had about 1,500 journalists. This is for about 7.5, 7.75 million people, in one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country that is very diverse, 1,500 journalists. These aren't support people. These are writers, professional journalists. Now there are less than 300 serving those same 7.5 million people in an area that is growing and has one of the most innovative and fastest growing economies in the world.

It is not just the bay area. Since 2004, 1,800 local papers have been closed or merged. What traditionally happens—and there are two large companies that do this—is they go in and buy the newspaper and then sell the assets. So very rarely now—when you go around to a city or a town where it used to be a prominent building was the headquarters of the local newspaper, those buildings have been sold.

The San Jose Mercury News had a prominent building in downtown San Jose right by city hall. In Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Times still thrives because it has local ownership, fortunately; but that L.A. Times building, a beautiful art deco that was so much a part of the history of Los Angeles, was directly across the street from city hall. There was a reason for that.

The Examiner and the Chronicle in San Francisco were prominent downtown. These were icons. Well, a lot of these consolidations came about, and they sold these iconic buildings where people worked. Then, of course, they sold the print functions because there was less to do and a lot of the distribution. But they also laid off and eliminated a lot of the journalists, and that is where we get our information.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 39,210 people worked as reporters and editors in the newspaper industry in 2017. This is down from 44,000, about 15 percent from 2015, and 71,645 in 2004, about a 45 percent nationwide decrease. About one-third of the large U.S. newspapers have suffered significant layoffs.

Additionally, journalists' wages remained low. In 2017, the median wage for an editor was only \$49,000, while the median wage for a reporter was about \$34,000. If you are in a place like the bay area, Los Angeles, New York, D.C., or Boston, you can imagine what the cost of living does to that kind of income for people whom we rely on to provide us information.

There is hope, however: some newspaper groups like the one in Philadelphia that has coordinated and consolidated with a nonprofit model and is refocusing its mission on producing excellent journalism to inform the public and focusing on local journalism.

There has been a spike in attendance in university journalism programs in spite of the numbers I just told you since this President took office in 2017.

Through programs to reengage citizens, particularly students, in the importance of journalism and reimagining how we fund print and electronic newspapers, we can ensure that journalism remains a bedrock of the country and a check on its power as it always has been.

As someone from the bay area who has had a relationship with our innovation and our tech companies, for Google and Facebook, they make millions of dollars off of journalists, and we think that they should contribute to that amazing asset that they have right now, largely free of charge. So we look to them to partner with us so that these platforms can be platforms not just for profit, but platforms for democracy, where local journalists can put their wares out there and be able to benefit from it just as they benefit from it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), who is my wonderful colleague from San Jose, in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. The gentleman has laid out the case quite eloquently.

I simply wanted to say that, while the government could never own or should never own the news media, we may have a role to create an environment where local news can flourish without our saying in any way how or what they should cover. But we know that local news covers local stories, and without the local news, you will never find out what is going on in city hall, what is going on in the board of supervisors, and what is going on on the planning commission and the like.

So what Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. CICILLINE, and others have outlined here is a very important challenge for the United States of America. If we are going to have control of our governments, we need to have information; and if we are going to have information, then we need to have a free press all the way from city hall up to the White House. We have got some holes in that coverage right now.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. CICILLINE, and others for the efforts that they are making, and I look forward to supporting them as they move forward.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking Congressman DESAULNIER

not only for organizing this important Special Order hour and saving local news, but for his enthusiastic and really passionate leadership on this issue.

I think the graphs that my friend from California presented tonight are an illustration of how grave the problem is and how essential it is that we develop a solution to help preserve our local newspapers, because I think we all recognize that our democracy is strongest when we have a free and diverse press that informs citizens, holds concentrated power accountable, and roots out corruption.

There are examples all across the country of local newspapers doing heroic investigative work uncovering corruption, holding power to account, and sharing important information with folks at the local level.

As Justice Brandeis wrote in 1927, those who won our independence believed that public discussion is a political duty, that the greatest threat to freedom is an uninformed citizenry, and that the freedom of thought and speech are indispensable to the discovery and spread of political truth.

But today, as you have so eloquently argued, these bedrock constitutional values are facing existential threats by the new gatekeepers of information, the dominant platforms.

Last year, Facebook and Google amassed more than \$60 billion from online advertising, the majority of all online ad revenue. Despite record levels of online readership, news publishers have seen a steep decline in revenue during the rise of these technology giants.

This bottleneck is bleeding publishers dry.

In an editorial published last year, my local newspaper, The Providence Journal explained that: "Google and Facebook now harvest the majority of the advertising that is supposed to sustain that journalism. It's essentially parasitism: newspapers and other journalistic enterprises do all the work, while Silicon Valley sucks out the profits."

In the absence of a competitive marketplace, newsrooms across the country are laying off reporters and editorial staff or folding altogether. This is happening to legacy news companies and digital publishers alike.

There is no question that we have reached a tipping point.

If this trend continues, we risk permanently compromising the news organizations that are essential to uncovering corruption, holding the government and powerful corporations accountable, and sustaining our democracy.

That is why Mr. DESAULNIER and I have introduced the Journalism Competition and Preservation Act, a bill that would strengthen journalism by allowing news publishers to collectively negotiate with dominant platforms to improve the quality, accuracy, attribution, and interoperability of news online.

It is critical that news publishers, both large and small, have a seat at the

table and equal bargaining power when negotiating with dominant platforms. Whether it is an online publisher or your local newspaper, we cannot have a democracy without a free and diverse press. Our country will not survive if we do not have shared facts, if corruption is not exposed and rooted out at all levels of government, and if power is not held to account. It is simply not possible.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his support and cosponsorship of the legislation, his passionate advocacy for moving forward with it and for organizing tonight's Special Order hour to bring attention to this really critical issue which is really at the center of preserving our access to quality, reliable, and trustworthy news information which is essential to the survival of our democracy.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CICILLINE for the nice comments.

This bill is extremely important, and I am proud to follow the gentleman's leadership in getting it passed and getting it signed.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. DESAULNIER for yielding to me. I also want to thank him and my colleague, Mr. CICILLINE, for sponsoring this important piece of legislation.

This really is a very concerning trend that is taking place in our society as more and more local news organizations in our communities are shutting down or becoming nonexistent. Maintaining a truly free and independent press is vital to our democracy.

I guess he is our favorite Founder tonight, Thomas Jefferson, also said: "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

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We, as a society, rely on members of the press to be our watchdogs, to sound the alarms and hold our government leaders accountable when necessary.

According to a study from the University of North Carolina, over the last 15 years, the newspaper industry has seen over 1,800 mergers or closures of print newspapers.

That is a staggering 20 percent of all newspapers in the country that have now closed since 2004.

In my home State of Colorado, we have three counties—Costilla, Baca, and Cheyenne—that have no daily or weekly papers at all.

And, in my hometown of Denver, where we have seen explosive population growth, we now only have one daily newspaper, The Denver Post. Our other newspaper, the Rocky Mountain News, published its last issue in 2009, 2 months shy of what would have been its 150th anniversary.

While it may have outlived the competition and it now serves as our city's only remaining daily paper, The Denver Post, too, has faced its share of hardships in recent years.

In 2013, The Post had over 250 employees, but today the number is less than 100. On April 8, 2018, in response to another round of devastating layoffs at the paper, The Denver Post's own editorial board published an op-ed entitled "As Vultures Circle, The Denver Post Must Be Saved."

In that op-ed, the editorial board wrote: "The smart money is that in a few years The Denver Post will be rotting bones. And a major city in an important political region will find itself without a newspaper."

These are not my words. These are The Denver Post's own employee's words. The massive decline in the number of reporters covering our local communities is not happening just in Denver. It is happening all over the country, and it is threatening to have real, tangible impacts on our communities.

Now, we heard Congresswoman LOFGREN question how we are going to get coverage of local government in our newspapers.

At The Denver Post, one of the layoffs they had was their one employee who covered Congress. So we are not only now not having coverage on local governments, but also of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Nationwide, the number of full-time reporters covering our State legislatures is down 35 percent from 2003.

And, while the reporters who remain continue as an invaluable service to our communities, frankly, they can't do it all, and, as a result, certain stories absolutely go unreported.

A joint study by the University of Notre Dame and the University of Illinois at Chicago found a connection between local newspaper closures and increased interest rates on local bonds. In fact, the study found that the closure of a local newspaper results in local taxpayers paying an extra \$650,000 in interest per loan.

That is \$650,000 in local taxpayer dollars that could otherwise go to schools, police, firefighters, potholes, or any other of a host of local needs, all lost simply because they didn't have local newspapers watching out on local government.

We often talk in Congress about the fox guarding the henhouse, but in too many small and rural communities there is no one guarding at all.

At the end of the day, for the sake of our democracy, we need local newspapers. We need local reporters. We need our watchdogs doing what they do best. We need to find ways to protect local news outlets and help them thrive.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. DESAULNIER for highlighting this pressing issue affecting our communities and for having us here to discuss this tonight.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all my colleagues who have joined me today. We started an informal group, actually, after the instance that the congresswoman talked about in Denver.

The same ownership owns the Bay Area News Group and the Los Angeles News Group, and there were similar layoffs there.

And in the Bay Area, being there, but also being there seeing the demise of local news, seeing the Chronicle in San Francisco, still owned by a local publisher, but then having the rest of the newspapers—almost the entirety of what was the bedrock of local news outside of San Francisco, for the other 7 million residents in the Bay Area—almost 7 million people—they have seen these large layoffs like Denver has.

I will say that, in my native town of Lowell, Massachusetts, the same company owns that newspaper, and a similar event has happened there.

There is nothing wrong with people making money, wanting to make a larger return on their investment; however, this is, I would argue, a very unique institution for democracy.

As Jefferson said, "Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press. . . ."

As Brandeis said: How people get their information, these are not things that you can separate. They are mutually intertwined.

So, we need the ability to have this, and particularly for local government.

When I started almost 30 years ago in the city of Concord, California, with a population of about 130,000 people, there was a gentleman named Larry Spears who had written for years for the Oakland Tribune and then for our local newspaper, The Contra Costa Times, a county of about a million people—not a small county.

He was in the front row. There are still journalists in that front row, but we need people—and more of them—in every front row. Mr. Spears knew the relationships, how people got elected to city council, who was appointed to the planning commission. Having him there made a difference.

It is human nature that, if you don't have someone watching, you are going to have human nature sometimes do things that it wouldn't if somebody who was professionally charged and trained to be able to explain to the general public what is happening and why it is happening was there.

People will talk about the truth and deep truth, "truth" being the simple explanation of what actually happened and "deep truth" being the meaning of why people took those physical actions.

This is what journalism is about. It is both being able to explain why a legislator or a city council member or a county supervisor did what they did and why they voted. But, as important is understanding why they did it. Did they do it for the reasons that they said that were part of the agendized items, or were there other influences

behind their thoughts? And, can we explain ourselves so that the public can understand why we took that choice.

And the ability of somebody to be able to communicate in an objective way what we say is important to democracy.

So, I hope that today is the beginning of a discussion. Mr. CICILLINE talked about his bill that I am proud to be a coauthor of that we introduced today. I think it is probably the most important.

We have many, many newspapers supporting it. We hope that there will be, obviously, a wave of support. Editorial boards, we ask for your help. Any interested citizen can contact my office. I have a simple name to remember as far as Googling it.

Let us know how you can help. If you are at a journalism school, if you are a journalist and you have ideas, give us ideas. These are constitutionally difficult issues.

The Congress shouldn't be, as Congresswoman DEGETTE said, deciding how the First Amendment is orchestrated, I should say, or organized. But we should be supportive because, if we are successful, it is because of independent journalism out there.

I would say that it is important that we have people who write, so that people who read and cognitively accept complicated issues will not become lazy.

We often get told that it is about our messaging, but messaging is a two-way street. It requires the person who is speaking, or writing, to be able to communicate in a succinct, profound, empathy-filled way, but it also requires us, as citizens, to be listening and understand that sometimes issues are complicated.

Well, how do you find that out? I would opine, as Mr. Postman did in 1985, that—and we know more about this now in terms of neuroscience and cognitive development and exercise—the more we read, the more we practice at our writing skills, the more we practice at our communication skills in general, the deeper our knowledge and the greater our capacity, cognitively, to understand and problem-solve.

So I would make the hope that this is the beginning of something that we will do good bipartisan work on and will allow for newspapers, as Jefferson said, to allow for democracy to exist and to prosper.

And lastly, in Lincoln's comment that I started with when he said: If you let the people know the facts, the country will be safe—our Speaker has a favorite quote where she says another Lincoln quote that says: Public opinion means everything. No statute, no public proclamation, Lincoln said, has any meaning if the people do not support it and it has their sentiment.

I would argue this other quote from Lincoln is equally as important: If the American people know the facts, the country will be safe.

We need to provide the professional journalism to make sure they get those facts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS FOR THE 116TH CONGRESS

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, April 2, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER, Pursuant to Rule XI, Clause 2(a) of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I respectfully submit the rules for the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis in the 116th Congress for publication in the Congressional Record. The Select Committee adopted these rules by voice vote, with a quorum being present, at our organizational meeting on Thursday, March 28, 2019.

Sincerely,

KATHY CASTOR,
Chair.

RULE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) The provisions of section 104(f) of H. Res. 6 (116th Congress) governing the proceedings of the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") are hereby incorporated by reference and nothing herein shall be construed as superseding any provision of that section. The Rules of the House of Representatives shall apply to the Committee to the extent that they are not inconsistent with that title.

(b) The rules of the Committee shall be made publicly available in electronic form and published in the Congressional Record not later than 30 days after the Committee adopts its rules.

RULE 2. MEETINGS.

(a) In General.—

(1) The regular meeting date of the Committee shall be the first Tuesday of every month when the House is in session in accordance with clause 2(b) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. If the House is not in session on the first Tuesday of a month, the regular meeting date shall be the third Tuesday of that month. A regular meeting of the Committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chair of the Committee, there is no need for the meeting.

(2) Additional meetings may be called by the Chair of the Committee as the Chair considers necessary, in accordance with clause 2(g)(3) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(b) Meetings of the Committee shall be called to order and presided over by the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, by a member designated by the Chair to carry out such duties.

(c) Notification.—

(1) Pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chair shall make a public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee meeting (other than a hearing), which may not commence earlier than the third calendar day (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such a day) on which members have notice thereof.

(2) The agenda for each Committee meeting, setting out all items of business to be considered, shall be established by the Chair and provided to each member of the Committee at least 36 hours (exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on such days) in advance of the commencement of such meeting.

(d) The requirements of paragraph (c) may be waived by a majority vote of those present, a quorum being present, or by the Chair with the concurrence of the Ranking Member. If the requirements of paragraph (c) are waived, the Chair shall notify the members of the Committee at the earliest possible time.

RULE 3. HEARINGS.

(a) Announcement of Hearings.—

(1) Pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chair shall announce the date, time, place, and subject matter of any hearing of the Committee, which may not commence earlier than one week after such notice.

(2) A hearing may commence sooner than specified in (a)(1) if the Chair, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member, determines there is good cause or the Committee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present. The Chair shall announce the hearing at the earliest possible time.

(b) Written Witness Statement; Oral Testimony.—

(1) Filing of Statement.—To the greatest extent practicable, each witness who is to appear before the Committee shall file with the clerk of the Committee a written statement of his or her proposed testimony at least two business days in advance of his or her appearance. The clerk of the Committee shall distribute this testimony to the Members of the Committee as soon as is practicable and at least one business day before the hearing. The requirements of this subparagraph may be waived or modified by the Chair after consultation with the Ranking Member.

(2) Each witness shall limit his or her oral presentation of testimony to no more than five minutes.

(3) Truth in Testimony.—Each witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity shall include with the written statement of his or her proposed testimony a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts or foreign government contracts and payments related to the subject matter of the hearing received during the current calendar year or either of the two preceding calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. The disclosure shall include (A) the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing; and (B) the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(4) Availability of Information.—Statements filed under this paragraph shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears.

(c) Notification of Subject Matter.—As soon as practicable but no later than 36 hours before the commencement of a hearing, the Chair shall make available to the public and all Members of the Committee a concise summary of the subject matter under consideration at the hearing, any relevant reports from departments or agencies on such matters, and a list of witnesses, including minority witnesses.

(d) Minority Witnesses.—When any hearing is conducted by the Committee on any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chair by a majority of those members, to call at least one witness, as selected by the minority members, to testify with respect to that measure or matter along with witnesses selected by the Chair.

(e) Opening Statements.—

(1) Chair and Ranking Member.—At any hearing of the Committee, the Chair and

Ranking Member shall each control five minutes for opening statements. The Chair and Ranking Member may recognize other members within their respective five minutes.

(2) Other Members.—The Chair may allow other members of the Committee to deliver oral opening statements, as appropriate, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member. Such statements shall not exceed five minutes in length and are to be equally distributed between majority and minority members to the extent practicable given the party makeup of the members present. Members not recognized by the Chair for oral opening statements may submit written opening statements for the record.

(f) Questioning of Witnesses.—The Chair shall initiate the right to question witnesses before the Committee, followed by the Ranking Member and all other members thereafter.

(1) Order of Member Recognition.—The right to question the witnesses before the Committee shall alternate between majority and minority members. A member of the Committee may question a witness only when recognized by the Chair for that purpose. The Chair shall recognize in order of appearance members who were not present when the meeting was called to order after all members who were present when the meeting was called to order have been recognized in the order of seniority on the Committee.

(2) Procedures for Questioning of Witnesses by Members.—Each member shall be limited to 5 minutes in the questioning of witnesses and shall limit his or her remarks to the subject matter of the hearing. After consultation with the Ranking Member, the Chair may recognize members who have already had an opportunity to question the witness for a second period of 5 minutes once each member of the Committee present has been recognized once for that purpose.

(3) Extended Questioning of Witnesses by Members.—Following the questioning of witnesses described in (f)(2) above, the Chair, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member or the Committee by motion, may permit a specified number of members to question one or more witnesses for a specified period of time not to exceed 60 minutes in the aggregate, equally divided between and controlled by the Chair and the Ranking Member.

(4) Questions for the Record.—Each member may submit to the Chair additional questions for the record to be answered by the witnesses who have appeared. Each member shall provide a copy of the questions in an electronic format to the Committee no later than 10 business days following a hearing. The Chair shall transmit all questions received from members of the Committee to the appropriate witnesses and include the transmittal letter and the responses from the witnesses in the hearing record. After consultation with the Ranking Member, the Chair is authorized to close the hearing record no earlier than 15 business days from the date the questions were transmitted to the appropriate witnesses.

(g) Hearings of the Committee shall be called to order and presided over by the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, by a member designated by the Chair to carry out such duties.

(h) Oaths.—The Chair of the Committee, or a member designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to any witness before the Committee. The Chair or his or her designee may administer the following oath to all witnesses prior to receiving testimony: "Do you solemnly swear or affirm, under penalty of law, that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"